DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 124 055 HE 007 906

TITLE	Report From the Special Committee to Assess University Policies and Plans. Report No. 76-4.
INSTITUTION	Council of Ontario Universities, Toronto.
PUB DATE	Apr 76
NOTE	35p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Administrative Policy; Admission Criteria; *Cooperative Planning; *Educational Coordination; Educational Economics; *Educational Finance; Educational Policy; Enrollment Trends; Financial Policy; Fiscal Capacity; *Higher Education; *Regional Planning; State Federal Support; Universities
IDENTIFIERS	*Ontario

ABSTRACT

The Special Committee to Assess University Policies and Plans was assigned the task of assessing the goals, policies and plans of the Ontario university system for the remainder of the 1970s and 1980s in the light of the competing governmental priorities, possible financial prospects and the anticipated numbers of qualified students. The proposals reported on include: clarification of goals and objectives; assessment of resource requirements; the priority of maintaining and improving quality; financial requirements to meet inflation and salary costs; accessibility and projected enrollment increases in undergraduate and graduate programs; cooperation in the elimination of unnecessary, costly duplication; and the critical choices required by funding limitations. (JMF)

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REPORT FROM THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO ASSESS UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PLANS

Council of Ontario Universities
Conseil des Universités de l'Ontario

Approved by the Council,
April 2, 1976

76-4

HE 007 906

F O R E W O R D

In December, 1974, the Council of Ontario Universities resolved to establish a Special Committee to Assess University Policies and Plans. This decision arose out of a deeply felt sense of crisis in the universities over the reconciliation of the needs of a high-quality university system and the apparent financial capability of the province.

The Committee produced a draft report in the form of a green paper which was reviewed extensively in the universities, following which the report went through several more drafts. At its meeting on April 2, 1976, the Council gave final approval to the report, which contains recommendations to the universities, the government, and the Ontario Council on University Affairs.

The OCUA has announced a round of 1976 spring hearings, which includes the topic of long-range planning for the university system. The Council has decided to transmit this report to the OCUA as the basis of its presentation.

John B. Macdonald
Executive Director

Membership of the Committee

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Report from the Special Committee to
Assess University Policies and Plans

Introduction

The terms of reference for the Special Committee were:

> To assess the goals, policies and plans of the Ontario university system for the remainder of the 1970's and the 1980's in the light of the competing governmental priorities, possible financial prospects and the anticipated numbers of qualified students.

The Special Committee decided to limit itself to matters of high priority requiring province-wide policies. In particular, the Committee has concentrated on making recommendations to produce effects in the next several years which would prevent the system from deteriorating any further while more fundamental re-orientations, if they are required, can be seriously considered and decided upon.

The Moment of Truth for the Ontario Universities

In Ontario, the government and the universities jointly entered an expansionary partnership during the sixties which brought about the creation of new universities and the expansion of established ones. Many new programmes were initiated, and a fourfold increase in enrolment was accommodated. The universities have substantially improved the existing undergraduate and graduate programmes and developed new ones; some of these programmes have reached international standards and reputation. This has been done primarily

through the contribution of thousands of faculty members who have been recruited by the Ontario universities, from non-Ontario university staffs or graduate students as well as from within the Ontario system. The universities have managed effectively to deal with unprecedented growth; they have maintained and improved academic quality; they have expanded and enriched the range of opportunities for the people of Ontario; they have honoured the objective of improving accessibility to university education; they have consulted and cooperated with each other and with the government of Ontario; they have introduced greater openness into the conduct of their affairs.

While there is still much room for improvement, the citizens of this province have a right to be proud of what has been accomplished through the generous contribution of public funds, provincial and federal.

No one questions the fact that the increases in student numbers and in public funds should not be maintained indefinitely at the rate of the last ten years. This has become more and more clear as the strains on provincial finances have increased, and the clamour for scarce resources has become louder. But the end of the unprecedented period of growth came upon the universities shortly after the turn of the decade in a sudden and unexpected fashion. The rate of increase

in enrolment dropped dramatically, and at the same time the BIU value (which represents unit revenue) was increased substantially less than the rate of inflation. Each year, from 1972-73 through 1975-76, the BIU has increased by values several percentage points below inflationary cost increases.[1]

The cumulative effects of these annual decisions of the provincial government (along with limitations on cost-sharing amounts from the federal government) have now brought the universities to the moment of truth at which they must seriously consider whether they can afford to continue to pursue existing goals, which have guided the universities as they have sought to meet the needs articulated by society. It should be stressed that these goals, while perhaps not always fully understood, have never been seriously challenged either by the public or by the government.

The Government's Message

The question has been raised, "What does the government want?" The clearest formal statement of funding objectives was that made by the Minister of Colleges and Universities in a statement to the legislature on November 18, 1974, concerning grants for 1975-76.

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1 The recent announcement of a 14.4% increase in total grants to universities for 1976-77 signals a recognition by government that the constraints of the past four years have been severe. Though the relief is welcome, the basic situation (i.e., BIU increases significantly less than inflation) remains unchanged and universities continue to face a financial future which cannot be reconciled with existing goals.

The operating support to universities was said to be "sufficient to offset inflationary trends, to maintain and improve existing levels of service, and to accommodate predicted enrolment increases". This straightforward statement has been challenged by both the Ontario Council on University Affairs and the Council of Ontario Universities, both of which have stated firmly that the funds provided for 1975-76 are insufficient to meet the objectives.

This dispute over the adequacy of funding to meet the government's stated objectives should be viewed against the background of various government actions and statements over the past several years. The debate was joined forcefully by a previous Minister of Colleges and Universities who gave currency to the phrase "more scholar for the dollar". The Premier, previous Ministers, and Ministry officials have made a number of statements which could be summarized as follows:

1) The government cannot afford to support the current large university system at a level which will permit universities to continue their traditional practices in the same way they did in the past.
2) The government is seeking improvements in "productivity", and its index of productivity is the student/faculty ratio.
3) The government will maintain a policy of accessibility for qualified students but wishes to see a more rigorous inter-

pretation of "qualified".

4) The government is unwilling to expand those universities which have reached capacity where there is still pressure for growth, and would welcome a cessation of growth in these universities in order to steer students to institutions with unused physical capacity.

5) The government believes that there is an undesirable level of duplication of programmes among the universities.

6) The government is expecting a greater level of system-wide planning and coordination.

In summarizing the government's objectives, we recognize that the government must determine the level of support which it is prepared to provide. This amount however has not been and is not sufficient to meet the universities' legitimate needs, given the policies of the last twenty years and the continuing commitment to accessibility and quality. A reconciliation of the government's objectives and its ability to support universities is needed. This report seeks to address the problems from the universities' point of view in an effort to be constructive.

The Goals of the Universities

The debate centres around "productivity", a term often used in its most superficial sense. Discussions about this concept cannot

be meaningful unless there is a full understanding of what the products are and of what process is necessary to create the products. Arguments based exclusively on such variables as "class size" or "contact hours" or even the "faculty/student ratio" narrow the focus so much that only one part of the whole is seen.

The overriding goal of the university as an institution and of all its individual members is scholarship -- that is, the joint product of teaching, learning and research, which is greater than the sum of the parts.

Teaching at the university level is not only a process of transmitting acquired knowledge and skills. It is a joint pursuit of knowledge in which the teacher and the student are equally engaged. Textbooks, where they exist, are subject to critical evaluation in the context of the continuing process of learning which goes on in academe throughout the world. This requires that the teacher be given sufficient time to continue to be personally engaged in this higher learning process, without which his teaching would not be maintained at the university level and without which he would no longer be a scholar.

University education cannot be considered just another layer of public education. It is neither better nor worse; it is differ-

ent. It presupposes public education and builds on it. The universities seek to create for society a group of broadly educated, questioning, creative citizens and professionals; to raise the level of critical functioning in society by developing powers of judgment; and to serve as a humanizing and civilizing force by fostering the aesthetic and moral, as well as the intellectual faculties. It is in this wide sense that university teaching must be understood. If student throughput at the expense of scholarship is forced upon the system, society will be the loser.

What makes mass higher education with broad accessibility such a significant step forward is precisely that the qualities of education deriving from scholarship can be made available much more widely than ever before. If these qualities are downgraded, this enormous gain will be lost.

The transmission of knowledge through teaching is only one aspect of scholarship. Research and the transmission of its findings is another. Research informs teaching and it is the application of the results of research, conducted personally or reported by other scholars, which transforms university teaching into a critical process. The end product for the student is a different, more valuable way of looking at issues. Participation in the national

and international academy of scholars is one of the best criteria to gauge the degree of maturity of our Ontario scholars.

There is virtually no aspect of a complex modern society that has not depended heavily on the findings of research done in the universities or by university-trained people. This is true in such diverse fields as environmental problems, transportation, urban planning, health care, communication systems, agriculture, legal systems and justice. This fact needs to be illustrated and interpreted in a continuing effort to ensure that the public understands the university enterprise.

Similarly, more needs to be said about the universites' role in interpreting the history and cultural development of our society and in generating ideas and challenges to conventional wisdom. Apart from generating knowledge which can be applied to the solution of human problems, the universities play a central role in deepening the understanding of a society about itself and the world.

Likewise, the commitment of universities to external service to the community is a major call on the resources of the institutions. The service which is provided to governments at all levels, to business and industry, to commerce and finance, and to the arts

is very large. Most sophisticated tasks facing society need the skills and knowledge of highly qualified specialists whose home is in the universities. All of these activities represent "products" of the university enterprise. Any discussion of productivity must place a realistic value on these "products", only a small portion of which are accompanied by supplementary financial compensation.

Much has been written about "future shock" and the post-industrial revolution. The universities, in one of the paradoxes of the seventies, have become victims of "future shock". Too much was expected of them in the fifties and sixties and too little is expected now. It is assumed by some that all would be well if the universities would simply provide more places at lower cost to broaden accessibility and enhance social mobility. In fact, if the universities are to meet their responsibilities, accessibility as a social goal must be only one part of their agenda, albeit an important one.

Society faces staggering problems in the remainder of the century. They are concerned with energy, resource management, population growth, food shortages, pollution control, steady state economies, international relations and many others. Most of them are both world problems and problems for Canada and Ontario. All of them are characterized by a new order of complexity and interrelatedness They are multidisciplinary on a grand scale. How is society to

deal with them? Where are the new specialized skills, the new generalist capabilities, the new organizational models that must be brought into being if they are to be dealt with successfully? Where is the sense of urgency in appreciation of the shortness of the lead time on many of the critical issues? None of these problems can be addressed successfully without the help of the universities, and the universities are unlikely to rise to the occasion if they are themselves spending too much of their precious time and energies preoccupied with financial survival.

The energies of the universities for the next twenty years need to be transformed from a concern for growth in coping with numbers to one of innovation in response to the new dilemmas of society. The missions of the university are unchanged: to teach, to learn, to serve; but the successful accomplishment of the missions will require enormous energies, flexibility and creativity in the coming years. How shall students be taught? What shall they be taught? How can specialists work more effectively on trans-disciplinary problems? How can individual freedom and collective responsibility be mutually served? How can research be organized to address the larger issues? How can the universities work more closely with governments, with the professions and with business and industry, and at the same time maintain enough of an arm's-length relationship that they do not lose their independence of

thought and action? All of these are questions with vast consequences for society. They are the real priorities of today for tomorrow, and it will be a tragedy if they are ignored and the opportunities are lost though unwillingness to meet their costs, because of a narrow view of universities which sees only student/staff ratios as the measure of productivity.

These are long-run concerns which can all too easily be lost sight of in difficult financial times. Both the universities and government need to recognize this. At present, the universities find themselves in the situation of Alice in *Through the Looking Glass*, having to run ever faster in an attempt just to stay where they are. As in other areas of society, there has been increasing talk in the universities of the "steady state". This is an unfortunate term which connotes preservation of the status quo. Major redirections of efforts will be needed to cope with issues such as enumerated above. To take another example, concerns about accessibility have been redirected from the massive growth in numbers which characterized the sixties to the provision of new opportunities for various groups within society which have not benefited proportionately from the enormous increase in university accessibility: women (in some programmes), native peoples, the elderly, and the historically disadvantaged socio-economic groups. The universities are conscious of these needs, and have done much to

meet them, but if mere survival becomes of necessity the overriding concern, the many varied and changing needs of society cannot be met.

The financial situation facing the universities is not one which is likely to encourage imaginative new developments to meet changing needs. Innovations generally require new funding and would find themselves in competition with urgent on-going commitments. Yet it is important that the universities not lie fallow during difficult fiscal times, that they be able to respond to important new circumstances and new initiatives. A possibility (which is not without its administrative difficulties) would be the establishment of a central fund for innovation. Its practicality would need to be examined by OCUA. In any case it is very important that some substantial recognition of the need for innovation be built into the arrangements for the difficult years the universities are facing.

Proposals

The Special Committee wishes to make a number of proposals to cope with the new environment. In making these proposals, the responsibility of government to determine the level of support which it will allocate to universities is recognized along with the fact that the sum allocated is now very large. It is

recognized also that together government and the universities have a responsibility to the people of Ontario to maintain a university system of high quality. The Special Committee believes that this can be done, given time to adjust, but that the accomplishment of this challenge will demand informed and reasonable judgments by government, and courageous decisions by the universities.

A. Clarification of goals and objectives

The adversary approach to discussions between universities and government which has characterized recent years can only contribute to obfuscation of the goals and objectives which should be shared by the universities and governments. A new order of candour and realism on all sides is required. The goals of the universities, the funding objectives of government, and the realistic expectations of the university system need to be clarified and better communicated to the public.

The statement of the Minister on funding objectives for 1975-76 (to offset inflationary trends, to maintain and improve existing levels of service, and to accommodate predicted enrolment increases) was a helpful step in this process. The Committee wishes to endorse these objectives, commenting that their implications need to be thoroughtly explored. Also, the Committee believes that these three objectives need to be conjoined with a fourth, that of

providing for the moment, within the framework of the anti-inflation guidelines, fair and equitable salaries for university personnel. If this cannot be achieved, the quality of the universities will inevitably suffer through inability to retain or attract an adequate calibre of staff in required numbers.

We return to each of these four objectives below.

To give effect to the clarification of goals and objectives, the Committee recommends that:

1.(a) *The government, OCUA, and the universities commit themselves to a realistic and frank dialogue on university goals and objectives.*

The Committee further suggests a process[2] for this dialogue, by recommending that:

(b) *Each university, where it has not already done so, prepare a statement of objectives for the remainder of the seventies;*

(c) *OCUA, with the assistance of COU, review these statements from the point of view of the overall provision of university resources in the province of Ontario, and advise the government thereon;*

(d) *the government publicly react to the report from OCUA.*

In making these recommendations on process, the Committee believes

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2. The process envisioned here is as described in the recent AUCC report, Planning for Planning.

that the initiative should rest in the first instance with the individual university. The universities share general goals, but each has historically developed its own unique role and set of emphases. This differentiation is the strength of the Ontario university system; any readjustment to changing realities and "rationalization" ought to heighten, not reduce, the degree of diversification.

B. Assessment of resource requirements

The specification of funding objectives is not only useful in identifying performance expectations. It also provides a set of benchmarks against which the adequacy of funds can be assessed. In Advisory Memorandum 74-IV, OCUA provided an analysis of this kind, admittedly rudimentary. In so doing, OCUA drew attention to the insufficiency of its information base, and the lack of accepted methodologies for the exercise. It is not surprising that the government on the one hand and the universities on the other disputed the results. While it would be unrealistic to expect that improvements in data and in methods would eliminate such disagreements, all parties acknowledge the need for better approaches to assessing resource requirements of universities, and for measuring the impact of a given level of funding on university operations.

Therefore, the Committee recommends that:

2. *The universities (individually and through COU), OCUA and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities commit themselves to an incensive effort to develop methodologies for assessing financial needs of the universities to achieve agreed goals.*

C. The first priority: to maintain and improve quality

For the reasons outlined above in discussion of the goals of the universities, the Committee believes that the maintenance and improvement of quality must be identified as the overriding first priority for the university system in the next few years. Quality is the essence of "levels of service" as identified in the government's funding objectives.

The committee recommends that:

3. *The government and the universities jointly determine to establish as a first-priority goal the maintenance and improvement of the quality of scholarship which has been attained in Ontario universities.*

On the part of government, this will require the willingness to undertake a fair assessment of the universities' needs and to make possible the provision of the necessary financial support. For the universities' part, they should intensify their efforts to make known to the public and the government the requirements of a quality university system. Implementation of this recommend-

ation will also require that the universities measure their internal resource allocation decisions against this overriding goal. Solutions will vary. Each university must identify and choose the solutions which will serve best to deal with its problems while maintaining a quality enterprise.

Over the past four years, the insufficiency of funds to meet inflationary cost increases has meant that non-salary budget items, particularly such items as library books, equipment, and maintenance have suffered most heavily. It has been suggested recently by government representatives that these decisions represent an undue emphasis on protecting jobs, particularly of faculty.

The teaching and support staffs represent the very essence of the university. If funds are insufficient, staff numbers in relation to the job to be done will inevitably have to be reduced. To an extent this is already occurring, through the use of attrition and careful policies limiting replacements. More drastic moves would be severely damaging, and the implications to morale and inevitably to quality should be weighed with the utmost care.

Any substantial reduction in the total establishment of staff in the universities of the province would, in the considered view of

the Committee, compromise the character of our universities. We believe firmly that it would be very unwise government policy to limit funds to the point where dismissals of faculty and staff must be undertaken for financial reasons. Consider the implications of increasing the overall student/staff ratio by one student through reducing the number of faculty. The number of faculty involved would be about 900 and the savings about $20 million, but at what cost? The formidable task of choosing who is to go and ensuring due process would preoccupy the university with an unproductive and demoralizing activity. Who shall be selected? The most junior or those closest to retirement? If seniority is the basis of security, what is the future of disciplines where able young persons are dismissed simply because they are junior? What would be the policy if the junior faculty are in fields already overcrowded? If those closest to retirement are to be retired early, what would be the costs in ensuring adequate pension benefits at pre-retirement age? Should faculty be considered redundant because they are in disciplines which at the moment are unfashionable with students? What are the implications for scholarship if student preferences can determine the fate of a discipline in the university? Would the decision be made on the basis of levels of competence and, if so, what kind of process is to be employed to select the least competent? What are the consequences for university administrations and faculty associations

in time and effort necessary to ensure fairness, humanity and equity? What would be the costs in lowered morale and, perhaps most of all, what would be the costs in lost opportunity, failure to innovate and lack of responsiveness to changing needs?

D. Financial requirements to meet inflation and salary costs

The government of Ontario has announced that the total funds available for university grants in 1976-77 will be $651 million, a 14.4% increase over the current year.

The universities are gratified to learn that their needs to maintain quality, offset inflationary costs and to accommodate enrolment increases have this year obtained significant acknowledgement by government. Since it is the stated intention of the Provincial Treasurer to limit the total growth in government spending to 10%, it is clear that the universities have been accorded high priority within the allocation process. This represents a recognition by government of the extent to which university revenues have been severely squeezed over the past several years. The purchasing value of a university dollar in 1971-72 had decreased by 1975-76 to about 83¢. Some measure of relief in this trend is deeply appreciated by the universities.

Since government has stated that student fees will not increase

in 1976-77, the increase in grants represents just under 13% in total revenue to the universities. Within this amount, the universities must accommodate enrolment increases, presently estimated at 5.4% in the current year. The increase in per student revenue of the universities therefore will be only in the order of 7%. The cost/revenue squeeze on the universities will continue to be marked, since inflation is still running well over the 8% guideline target. The pattern of budget constraint which has affected all aspects of university operations in recent years will thus have to be continued.

The difficulties in this regard which the universities are facing are highlighted by a recent analysis of provincial government grants per FTE student across Canada. The analysis shows that whereas Ontario's grants ranked third in Canada in 1971-72 and 1972-73, they had dropped to sixth place by 1973-74. By 1975-76, Ontario's grants per student had fallen to ninth place. It seems likely that such startling evidence accounted, at least in part, for the relatively generous treatment of the universities announced for 1976-77. However, given the general economic difficulties being faced by the government, the widely acknowledged necessity for the government to constrain its total expenditures, and the many competing priorities, it is predictable that a cost-target gap between stated objectives and available funding will continue in future years.

If priority in funding is to be given to maintaining quality and preventing further erosion of the resource base of the universities, and if both base and growth cannot be funded adequately, then a fundamental readjustment in the funding of growth is necessary. The essential principle of this readjustment should be that growth is de-emphasized as a source of revenue to balance the books.

The Committee therefore recommends that:

> *The universities through COU endorse a recommendation to OCUA and the government that a marginal value of the BIU be established for growth, in 1976-77 and the two succeeding years.*[3]

The Committee has spent a great deal of time in examining the way in which such a system might work, and recognizes that there are many complexities. The Committee wishes to draw attention to a number of features which must be examined.

1) There should be provision for an exception to the marginal value in those cases where professional programmes are growing as a matter of deliberate government policy.
2) The calculation of BIU entitlement in relation to enrolment (currently slip year) may require adjustment.

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3 This recommendation was written prior to the OCUA decision not to introduce a marginal value for 1976-77, but rather to fund on the basis of an average enrolment count over more than one year. The Committee nonetheless maintains its recommendation with respect to future policy.

3) A decision must be made on whether the new students are funded at full value in years subsequent to their first.

4) The division of total available funds between base costs and growth costs is critical. Two alternatives were considered by the Committee. In the first approach, the division between base and growth costs would be fixed, and the marginal BIU value would be determined (not to exceed 50%) by dividing actual enrolment increases into the growth funds. The other approach would be to fix the marginal value and then establish the division in view of actual enrolment. Combinations of these two approaches are also possible.

A marginal growth value system should have the effect of redirecting growth to those institutions and programmes where there is underused capacity (physical resources or staff). The Committee is not sure how effectively a redistribution would be obtained, but believes that this would be a step in the right direction, viable at least in the short term. Substantial shifts in regional or programme demand would create pressures over the longer run for the government to provide additional resources for growth which could not be accommodated at marginal values.

E. Accessibility and projected enrolment increases: undergraduate programmes

Government statements of objectives on admission of students have

referred to "accommodating projected enrolment increases" and to "maintaining accessibility for all qualified applicants". There is increasing agreement that the meaning of such statements needs to be re-examined. The universities have expressed concern over the variable preparedness of high school students for university studies, and the increasing difficulties of assessing qualifications for entry. When he was Minister, the Honourable James Auld commented that "current admission standards (may be) less stringent than in the past".

The Ministries of Colleges and Universities and Education are jointly undertaking a thorough review of preparedness of students for university studies and university admissions policies and procedures. The Ministries have called for the advice of OCUA on certain aspects of the review. The Committee welcomes this study, since it believes that there is a need for a better factual understanding of the situation and better articulated policies. Therefore, the Committee recommends that:

5. *The universities pledge full cooperation with the study of student preparedness and university admission policies being undertaken by the Ministries of Colleges and Universities and Education, with the assistance of OCUA. As part of this cooperation, the universities individually and collectively should review admissions policies and practices to ensure that they are serving the best interests of the students.*

There is also a need for a system overview of the opportunities

for students. Increasingly universities are placing ceilings on programme enrolments because of limitations of capacity, and for other reasons of sound university planning. The sum of university enrolment projections for 1975-76 was substantially below the demand for places. This may be simply because of the distinction between expectations and possible capacity; this requires study. Upper-limit capacity figures, year by year, are needed as well as projections of likely intake. Any effort to redirect students within the system increases the importance of monitoring developments to ensure that opportunities for students are not being restricted inadvertently and unduly.

The Committee therefore recommends that:

6. *The OCUA give high priority to a dialogue with the universities on their enrolment expectations, including a review of limits on capacity, in order to generate a system overview of opportunities for students, for the advice of the universities and government. The assistance of COU should be offered for the aggregation and analysis of figures provided by the universities.*

F. Accessibility and projected enrolment increases: graduate programmes

OCUA has made it clear in two recent memoranda on graduate studies (75-IV and 75-V) that in the Council's view the ACAP assessments have not taken into consideration sufficiently the financial implications of their plans, or the overall effect of their plans on the universities in times of financial constraint. In its most

recent memorandum, OCUA recommended "that the present formula be suspended with respect to the funding of graduate work in 1976-77 and 1977-78 in favour of grants to institutions that will be totally insensitive to changes in enrolment levels". The Minister has accepted the recommendation. In offering its advice, OCUA said:

> The Council of Ontario Universities' processes of assessment, appraisal and three-year institutional plans must remain in place, and Council will be prepared to assist in the enforcement of these processes by recommending appropriate penalties in the doubtless unlikely event that the need should arise. For the rest, Council's request in Advisory Memorandum 75-IV that COU submit expanded monitoring reports and new programme proposals in an annual package acquires redoubled significance. In a setting where graduate funding is divorced from enrolment levels for a minimum period of two years, Council's interest not only in new programme development, but in the possible reduction of established programmes that can be considered without immediate revenue loss, will be absolute.

The Committee accepts the recommendation and the implications of the OCUA comments concerning the need for continued planning and review in the context of financial constraint.

The Committee believes that attention also needs to be directed to the overall scale of the graduate studies enterprise and to the principles which should govern accessibility to graduate programmes. Much of the base for such a review has already been laid in the course of the ACAP assessments which now have been completed for some twenty disciplines. The proposal does

not contemplate tilling the same ground again. Plans and recommendations which have had extensive review are in existence for these twenty disciplines and should be the basis of action. What is required is a careful review of the overall size of the graduate enterprise. In this process it will be necessary to balance carefully the aspirations of students, the capacity of the programmes, the high cost of graduate education and the needs of society. Currently, graduate admissions are geared to accept the anticipated demand from qualified students. This policy is consistent with the statements by government about accessibility but it begs the question of the appropriate overall dimension of the graduate enterprise in Ontario. Is the current enrolment of 18,000 FTE appropriate, given the high cost, and given the character and state of development of Ontario society? How does it compare with the size of the graduate enterprise in other advanced and wealthy jurisdictions? Is there a proper balance of Canadian students (citizens and landed immigrants) and students on visas from other countries? Questions of this kind are very different from the more detailed and generally unproductive approach to high-level manpower which attempts to relate output of doctorates in, say, chemistry or economics to specialized job opportunities. The latter approach has been unsuccessful wherever it has been used, at least in part because of the unpredictability of the short-term job market and the long lead time involved.

Entry to the job market occurs some four to six years after admission to graduate school. The former questions about the proper size of the overall graduate enterprise are important matters of public policy which have not yet been addressed to any significant extent.[4]

Therefore the Committee recommends that:

7. *The universities individually and through the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies should review admissions policy and practices for entry into graduate programmes to ensure that they are serving primarily the needs of Ontario and Canada.*

G. Cooperation in the elimination of unnecessary, costly duplication

Statements from government representatives reveal the view that there is still much to be done in system-wide planning and coordination to eliminate costly unnecessary duplication and effort. Graduate studies is one area which receives a great deal of attention. In order to respond to these concerns, the Committee believes that the universities should build upon the work to date in assessment of graduate programmes. The assessments of graduate programmes have identified the programmes of good quality in each discipline but it could be that in some cases the number of such programmes

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4 Historical and comparative statistics presented in the Report from the Special Committee on the Financial Implications of Graduate Planning, approved by the Council on April 2, 1976, suggest that the present scale of graduate work in Ontario is by no means excessive.

supported by COU recommendations is larger than necessary to meet the demand. In each discipline the question turns on the unused capacity in the system in terms of both human and physical resources. It may be that some economies can be achieved by discontinuing certain programmes, even though their quality is good, simply because of redundancy of opportunity. Where such potential economies exist, their benefit must be weighed against the consequences of closing programmes of good quality. Any significant economies for the individual university discontinuing a programme would depend on a further step, that of eliminating redundant resources. In practice this would involve the redeployment or dismissal of faculty. Since the faculty involved will have been identifed by external consultants as being of high quality, the route of dismissal would be unlikely to make sense; such persons are likely to be among the university's outstanding academics. Therefore redeployment is probably the only reasonable option, and this may not be feasible in many cases. It would be essential that any such decisions recognize the necessity of earmarked funding to support research in departments and for professors whose qualifications have been recognized but where graduate programmes are not to be supported. In addition, arrangements would be required to ensure that such professors have the opportunity to supervise the theses of graduate students registered in other universities. Because of the number of considerations involved

and their bearing on the overall health of the university, graduate assessments while identifying redundancies should leave to individual universities the ultimate decisions about the future of programmes judged to be of good quality.

The Committee therefore recommends that:

8. *COU, with the advice of OCGS, should review the distribution of assessed graduate programmes with the aim of identifying any unnecessary and costly duplication.*

Though we recommend a review, we suspect that any economies through this route will be marginal.[5]

Improved planning and coordination can be envisioned in many other areas of university activity. The committee recommends that:

9. *COU and the universities should commit themselves to continuing and expanding their efforts in planning and coordination and should receive financial support from government to assist these efforts.*

A number of areas could benefit from greater attention. The following are suggested possibilities:

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5 The Report of the Special Committee on the Financial Implications of Graduate Planning contains recommendations on the approach which should be taken to the identification and elimination of unnecessary duplication.

1) COU could explore the value of extending the services of the Application Centre to additional professional schools subject to receiving start-up grants from the Minister.

2) The various programmes of library coordination could be accelerated and extended if start-up funds were provided.

3) The possibility of new initiatives in respect of computer coordination should be explored.

4) The Programme for Instructional Development might be expanded or modified.

5) Planning studies, such as the current study of architectural education, could be undertaken in other professional fields subject to government support.

6) The Council of Deans of Arts and Science could be asked to review opportunities for coordination of undergraduate programmes, for example, a system of cross-credits in costly fields.

H. The critical choice

We might draw together the preceding discussion by pointing up the critical choice which must be made if resources available to the universities continue to be constrained to the extent that existing goals cannot be achieved. The universities must have the necessary funds to adequately offset inflation, to provide equitable salaries, and to support the human resource base

required to provide the quality that the people of Ontario have a right to expect. If the sum of government grants and other sources of revenue available to the universities remains insufficient to meet existing objectives, something will have to give.

What are the choices? One possibility attractive to government is that the universities find new ways of educating their students at lower cost. Given the financial attrition of the past four years there is little prospect of fulfilling such a hope. Universities automatically will try to devise less costly alternatives to achieve their objectives but there is no reason to believe that any gains can be more than marginal. The remaining choices are to allow quality to deteriorate or to limit accessibility to what the province can afford. The Committee has stated its belief that given this unpalatable choice Ontario should opt for quality and should therefore control the rate of growth in enrolment. In the last analysis that is a decision which must be made by the government. If the funds are insufficient to meet the objectives, government might decide nevertheless to maintain the open door for qualified applicants. There should be no illusions about the consequences of such a choice. Quality will suffer.